

I. AMENDMENT

Please amend claim 20, and add new claims 24-38, as follows.

In the claims:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Canceled)
3. (Canceled)
4. (Canceled)
5. (Canceled)
6. (Canceled)
7. (Canceled)
8. (Canceled)
9. (Canceled)
10. (Canceled)
11. (Canceled)
12. (Canceled)
13. (Canceled)
14. (Canceled)
15. (Canceled)
16. (Canceled)
17. (Canceled)
18. (Canceled)
19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A fiber-containing cement composition, comprising a hydraulic cement base and a natural mineral fiber; wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in an amount greater than about 10% by weight of cement; wherein said natural mineral fiber is also

present in said fiber-containing cement composition in an amount ~~selected to be~~ effective so as when said fiber-containing cement composition is mixed with an aqueous-based fluid to result in a cement slurry that forms ~~and a cured cement composition formed from said cement slurry~~ having a ratio of flexural strength to compressive strength that is greater than or equal to about 0.35 when said cement slurry is exposed to a temperature of greater than about 180°F; and wherein said natural mineral fiber comprises at least one calcium silicate natural mineral fiber.

21. (Original) The fiber-containing cement composition of claim 20, wherein said calcium silicate natural mineral fiber comprises at least one of wollastonite, pyrophyllite, almagatolite, or a mixture thereof.

22. (Original) The fiber-containing cement composition of claim 20, wherein said calcium silicate natural mineral fiber comprises wollastonite.

23. (Original) The fiber-containing cement composition of claim 22, wherein said hydraulic cement base comprises Portland Cement.

24. (New) A fiber-containing cement slurry, comprising a hydraulic cement base, a natural mineral fiber, and an aqueous-based fluid; wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in an amount greater than about 10% by weight of cement; wherein said natural mineral fiber is also present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount effective to result in a cured cement composition formed from said cement slurry having a ratio of flexural strength to compressive strength that is greater than or equal to about 0.35 when said cement slurry is exposed to a temperature of greater than about 180°F; and wherein said natural mineral fiber comprises at least one calcium silicate natural mineral fiber.

25. (New) The fiber-containing cement slurry of claim 24, wherein said calcium silicate natural mineral fiber comprises at least one of wollastonite, pyrophyllite, almagatolite, or a mixture thereof.

26. (New) The fiber-containing cement slurry of claim 24, wherein said calcium silicate natural mineral fiber comprises wollastonite.

27. (New) The fiber-containing cement slurry of claim 26, wherein said hydraulic cement base comprises Portland Cement.

28. (New) A hardened cement composition cured in at least a first portion of a wellbore having a temperature that is greater than about 180°F; wherein said hardened cement composition is cured from a fiber-containing cement slurry comprising a hydraulic cement base, a natural mineral fiber, and an aqueous-based fluid; wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount greater than about 10% by weight of cement; wherein said natural mineral fiber is also present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount effective so that said hardened cement composition has a ratio of flexural strength to compressive strength that is greater than or equal to about 0.35 at said temperature of greater than about 180°F in said at least a first portion of said wellbore; and wherein said natural mineral fiber comprises at least one calcium silicate natural mineral fiber.

29. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein said calcium silicate natural mineral fiber comprises at least one of wollastonite, pyrophyllite, almagatolite, or a mixture thereof.

30. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein said calcium silicate natural mineral fiber comprises wollastonite.

31. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 30, wherein said hydraulic cement base comprises Portland Cement.

32. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein a temperature of said at least a first portion of said well bore is greater than about 200°F; and wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount effective so that said hardened cement composition has a ratio of flexural strength to compressive strength that is greater than or equal to about 0.35 at said temperature of said at least a first portion of said wellbore that is greater than about 200°F.

33. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein a temperature of said at least a first portion of said well bore is greater than about 240°F; and wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount effective so that said hardened cement composition has a ratio of flexural strength to compressive strength that is greater than or equal to about 0.35 at said temperature of said at least a first portion of said wellbore that is greater than about 240°F.

34. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein a temperature of said at least a first portion of said well bore is greater than about 380°F; and wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount effective so that said hardened cement composition has a ratio of flexural strength to compressive strength that is greater than or equal to about 0.5 at said temperature of said at least a first portion of said wellbore that is greater than about 380°F.

35. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount effective so that said hardened cement composition has a ratio of flexural strength to compressive strength that is greater than or equal to about 50% higher than the ratio of flexural strength to compressive strength of a cured conventional cement composition having substantially the same composition, but without said natural mineral fiber component, at said temperature of said at least a first portion of said wellbore that is greater than about 180°F.

36. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount effective so that a compressive strength of said hardened cement composition increases when said temperature of said at least a first portion of said wellbore is allowed to rise above about 180°F from a temperature that is less than about 180°F when said cement slurry is introduced into said wellbore and allowed to cure.

37. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein said natural mineral fiber is present in said fiber-containing cement slurry in an amount of from greater than about 10% by weight of cement to about 150% by weight of cement.

38. (New) The hardened cement composition of claim 28, wherein said well bore is a geothermal well or a steam injection well.